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NEWS RELEASE

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United States Attorney Paul J. McNulty announced today the launch of a second public service advertising campaign aimed at reducing gun crime. The Public Service Announcements (PSA) present vignettes of the consequences of gun crime to show how gun crime adversely affects not only the perpetrators and victims but also the families of those who choose to use a gun illegally.

The first Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) PSA, released in September 2003 and entitled "Mothers," focused on the pain a mother experiences when her child commits a gun crime and is incarcerated. The second and most recent collection of PSAs further illustrate that "Gun Crimes Hit Home" by emphasizing the effects of gun crime on the families of the perpetrator. "The destruction wrought by gun crime devastates the very core of the American family," said Mr. McNulty.

Mr. McNulty said: "Through PSN we have an effective partnership with federal, state, and local police to ensure the strongest possible punishment for those who violate gun laws. Each of the 94 United States Attorneys are implementing Project Safe Neighborhoods in a manner that addresses the specific gun crime problems unique to their district. These public service advertisements represent the next stage in the effort to create safer neighborhoods by reducing gun crime.

The Eastern District of Virginia filed more than 310 firearms charges in fiscal year 2003, representing almost a 20% increase from the previous year. These numbers mean fewer violent felons on the streets of Richmond and Newport News; fewer armed drug traffickers in Portsmouth and Petersburg; fewer violent gang members in North Virginia; and overall, safer neighborhoods throughout Eastern Virginia. "I am proud of the local impact being observed through our vigorous prosecutions of armed criminals as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods," said Mr. McNulty.

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